

The Nation's Pawn

By Roy Norton

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"Captain," he said, putting his arm in a friendly way over the officer's shoulder, "I know just what you are thinking of, all about your uncertainty and how hard you are hit. As an old officer of the regular army, I am going to advise you to go back to your post, and by work try to forget the anxiety which you must feel. I give you my word that you can do nothing more than we can. I will do more than that. I promise you, on my word as an officer and a gentleman, that I will keep you fully informed of everything pertaining to the case. Worrying will not help you to recover your father."

"But, general, do you think that the Conservatives—?"

"No, no, no! I don't think the Conservatives had a thing to do with this, any more than we did with the disappearance of Lester. It's only the rank and file of both sides who believe that the leaders of either party would stoop to a thing so underhand and so futile as the seizing of big men—official or otherwise."

DICK returned to the White House forlorn and distressed, realizing now to the full extent what Grace must have suffered in her time of grief. He found a state of unrest which he had never before witnessed. He was told by a companion in arms the astounding news that within the preceding twenty minutes a report had been received of the firing on the United States cruiser "Portland," in the harbor of Hong Kong, following a trumpety row by blue-jackets ashore. The report also stated that the crippled ship was now lying in the Chinese harbor, substantially a prisoner, although the flag had not been pulled down. It was tantamount to a declaration of war between the United Empire and the United States, and already the Secretary of the Navy had set the machinery of office in motion, and ordered the mobilization of the Atlantic and Pacific fleets, sparing neither cable nor wireless to further his commands. Dick listened, forgot his own trouble for the time being, and experienced a sense of elation when told that the event had in a measure been foreseen by the President, and that the navy of the United States could not possibly have been in a better position to act than at this crucial time. He turned away to gain what other news he could, with a particularly pleasing confidence in his country's ability gained from his brief duty at the testing grounds of Sandy Hook.

It was known to him and a few others only that the long discussed Maxim explosive shell had been perfected, and was even then in the magazines of many western battleships; and that, in itself, it was of such deadly power as to nullify any temporary advantage which the Orientals might obtain. As the gruff old inventor had himself said, in his characteristic way: "'I'm giving my country something that I'd hate like hell to see used against white men, but it's a mighty fine agent where there's a streak of yellow.'"

Lengthening the Span of Human Life

By B. K. Mann

(Con. from page 12)

Item. Could the days of illness be cut down one-third, nearly \$500,000,000 would be saved."

The appeal of such figures as these is tremendous from the economic side—equally as great is the appeal of those facts that cannot be measured by figures—the increase in happiness and the decrease in misery due to sickness and death.

It is not strange that a man like Professor Fisher should devote so much of his time and thought to the promotion of the movement to increase health and decrease mortality—the possibilities are enormous and irresistible in their all to men who know.

But Dr. Fisher has another reason to feel that the movement is altogether plausible and worth while—a reason found in a personal experience in prolonging his own life when it seemed certain that it must end while he was still a young man.

In 1884 Dr. Fisher's father died of tuberculosis and a few years later he himself was attacked by the same disease. He took himself in hand immediately, went west for a time, lived in the open and healed his lungs. Then he came back east again to his work. But he found that he was still not fit—he couldn't work—not as he used to work. He lacked what he called "efficiency"—ability to focus his mind on a subject and keep it there, sharp and clear. Then he ran across a good physician.

"I think I understand your case," said this doctor. "The right side of our vest is wrinkled," he added as he passed his hand over a curved ravine in the professor's waistcoat.

The wrinkle was evident to Professor Fisher, but not so the doctor's point.

"Now if you will remove your clothing you will find a wrinkle in the same place across your abdomen. There are also some sore spots along your spine, and a lot of blood that should be in your brain

Dick's fellow officers were discussing nothing now save the chance of foreign war, and the corridors were like a mess-room, swarming with men who talked in whispers and showed by their eager faces that they hoped to turn their arms against an outside foe rather than their own countrymen. One or two were inclined to criticize the President's answer to the Chinese embassy, but more careful thought led to the conclusion that this could not have precipitated the unfortunate event in Hong Kong. It was made quite plain that the United Empire had been looking for a pretext for war, and although it had come a few days sooner than expected, it would not be unwelcome to the eastern empire. The sympathy of everyone seemed going out to the white-haired man behind the doors, who, throughout his trying ordeal, had so quietly maintained an equable poise and untiringly given the best that was in him for what from his viewpoint was right.

Without comprehending it, the nation itself was undergoing a subtle change of sentiment, which was to bear unlooked-for fruits. It was to be advanced more rapidly in its growth by the actions of the man in the White House, who had uncomplainingly borne the brunt of all disputes and the woes of many supporters. But the pitiful part of the imbroglio was that he—who had strength or character sufficient to uphold a Vice President in a trying decision, to sit calmly and counsel peace when civil war confronted, and, at last, to overrule his Cabinet when a foreign war threatened—was now stricken down and delivered to the hands of pathological experts. The whispers which went around the stately halls of the executive mansion told that the President of the country had at last succumbed, and was even then in a critical condition, necessitating absolute rest and retirement. He had lived beyond his term of office and the hope he had sustained of laying down the load of care had been frustrated by conditions over which he had no control, and for which he was in no wise responsible.

AFTER the Cabinet meeting had been dismissed, various military experts had been summoned to the White House, had passed beyond the doors leading to the President's private apartments, remained a long time, and emerged with grave faces and down-hanging heads. It was apparent to those in the intimate circle that the head of the nation was on the verge of a breakdown, which would leave the country in the hands of the Vice President, who had neither the confidence nor the proven poise to meet the exigencies which he might be compelled to face.

There was an interval in which chaos seemed eminent. Then, from the President's apartments, came the private secretary, who hastily summoned the representatives of the various newspapers and press associations, who had been waiting in an outer room close to the rear entrance. They came quietly, their usual

air of jocular good humor suppressed, their hats in their hands, and were conducted to the private portion of the White House, passing the guard, the captains on watch and the stately usher. They were received but a short time, and afterward hurried out in quick procession, their faces aglow with the knowledge that they had been given another story by the President.

It was like the last stroke of a bitterly wounded soldier, dying in the field with his face still turned to the foe. It seemed to be the final effort which the ruler of the nation could make in behalf of his country, and it was a message couched in words which left no question as to his attitude or the motives which had actuated him throughout the troublous times. It read:

"I am addressing this in the full knowledge that I am spent, that it is a personal appeal issued by me as an American, rather than as the President of the United States—and that I can do no more. I have striven my utmost to avert a situation which has unfortunately been created. Now my appeal is made as from a man to men. As all who read are aware, the country has been torn and distressed by political dissension. This has been augmented seemingly by the unprecedented and unlawful actions of one or many, known to us only as 'The Nation's Pawn.' There have been taken from among us by unknown means the standard-bearers of the two great political organizations. Every effort has been made on the part of the administration to find these men, and to return them to the field of their activities. So far, these efforts have been unavailing. The administration has today learned that, by intent or otherwise, an embarrassing incident has taken place in the waters of the United Empire of China and Japan, which may possibly terminate in war with that country unless a peaceable means may be discovered without relinquishment of honor. Our country divided can face nothing but defeat. I, as one who is familiar with the situation, one who has given all that he has to give—and I, as an American, appeal to other Americans in this hour of dire need to forget all party differences, all disputes which have arisen and all bitterness which has come from the recent election, and to remember only that, since the beginnings of history in this our country, men have not fought amongst themselves when threatened by an outward foe. The country has resources, it has arms and it has defenders. If these, our own dissensions, be forgotten and cast aside. In this, which may be my last message, I therefore beg all those true to the greater needs of home and country to use their endeavors for the unification of the nation, in the firm belief that a Supreme Being Who has granted us so much of strength will not be found on the other side, if justice be with our cause and allied with the flag which we have in past times upheld and defended by our blood when necessity arose."

(Continued next week.)

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GRASSHOPPER CAKE.

IN the good old days the southern California Indian cooks prepared a dainty that was not down in the White House Cook Book. In this case, as in the famous recipe for cooking a hare, it was, "first, catch the grasshoppers."

The Indians had various methods of doing this, but the most popular way, and the most characteristic of the humane and gentle disposition of these Indians, was as follows: Some thirty or forty of the Indians, armed with long, light sticks, would form a large circle around a convenient grasshopper pasture, where the whirling insects lived by millions; and then, at a given signal, all would slowly move toward the common center, yelling and beating the grass with their sticks, and driving their prey before them. When they had thus corralled millions of the grasshoppers in a sufficiently small circle, they would set the grass around this circle on fire. A quick blaze that lasted just long enough to burn off the wings and legs of the grasshoppers was the result of this fire. Every Indian now plunged into this scorched

mass of insects and gathered his individual supply of the dainty.

The grasshoppers thus captured were thoroughly dried and ground into a fine powder. Acorn flour was then mixed with this powder, a little water poured on the compound, and the whole stirred with a stick until the paste became of the right consistency. The "dough" thus made was baked into cakes, which many white men declared quite eatable—until they discovered the kind of flour that went into their making.

Stews and soups were also made out of this grasshopper flour, and were considered especially delicious—by the Indians.